

Tourism's Economic Impact Increases 5.8 Percent in 2004

Tennessee's tourism industry impact on the state's economy continued to grow in 2004, increasing from \$10.8 billion in 2003 to \$11.475 billion in 2004. The 5.8 percent jump in economic impact was announced during the Governor's Conference on Tourism Sept. 21-23 in Franklin as part of the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development's annual state of the industry report.

"Tourism in Tennessee is big business, and business is booming," said Tourism Commissioner Susan Whitaker during her annual address to members of the state's tourism industry. "This is great news as we begin the power launch of our new advertising campaign with a special appropriation of \$4.5 million by Governor Phil Bredesen and the Tennessee General Assembly."

The economic impact numbers are part of the 2004 Economic Impact of Travel on Tennessee Counties Study prepared for the Department by the Travel Industry Association of America.

Whitaker noted that since Governor Bredesen took office in 2003, the tourism industry's economic impact has grown more than \$1 billion from \$10.3 billion to \$11.475 billion, an increase of 11.4 percent.

According to the study, the top five Tennessee counties for travel related expenditures are Davidson (\$3.2 billion, a 5.8% increase), Shelby (\$2.45 billion, a 3.6% increase), Sevier (\$1.2 billion, a 6.4% increase), Knox (\$637 million, a 6.4% increase), and Hamilton (\$601 million, a 6.8% increase).

For a complete report, contact the Department or visit www.tennessee.gov/tourdev.



2005 Governor's Conference A Great Success!

FRANKLIN – More than 300 tourism professionals from across the state converged on Franklin Sept. 21-23 for the 2005 Governor's Conference on Tourism at the Cool Springs Conference Center.

The annual conference, which is co-sponsored by the Tennessee Tourism Roundtable and the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development, provides a platform to exchange ideas, share resources and plan for future growth in the industry.

"Once again, TTR developed and hosted a terrific Governor's Conference packed full of great Tennessee hospitality and attractions along with exceptional educational and networking opportunities, said TDTD Commissioner Susan Whitaker. "And, our host city of Franklin along with John Whisenant and his team were the perfect hosts and did an incredible job. I want to thank TTR and Franklin for a history-making conference."

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Vacation Guide Inquiries On the Rise

With the power launch in July of the TDTD new advertising campaign, the number of inquiries in July, August and September for the Tennessee Vacation Guide have increased by 47,672 requests over the same time period last year.

For the month of September, inquiries increased by 16,789 – up from 11,183 in September 2004 to 27,972 in September 2005. In August 2005, the department had 41,954 inquiries compared to 18,355 in August 2004. And during July 2005, the department had 39,087 inquiries compared to 31,083 in July 2004, which was the second month of the Department's test marketing of the new campaign.

The power launch of the Department's campaign in 2005-06 is funded by a one-time appropriation of \$4.5 million that was allocated in Governor Phil Bredesen's proposed budget and approved by the Tennessee General Assembly in June.

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TENNESSEE MOVES TO 11th MOST VISITED STATE BY DOMESTIC TRAVELERS

The number of visitors to Tennessee in 2004 outpaced 2003's figures by 890,000, according to the Travel Industry Association of America's (TIA) 2004 TravelScope Survey. The increase from 42.75 million domestic visitors to 43.64 million was a 2.1 percent increase and ranked Tennessee 11th in the country based on U.S. domestic travel volume by U.S. residents as measured in person trips.

The increase was announced by the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development after receiving a TravelScope research survey from TIA. The survey also shows that Tennessee's domestic leisure travel visitors increased 7.1 percent in 2004, jumping from 34.7 million person trips to 37.1 million person trips.

"I'm thrilled to see our visitor numbers continue to grow. It's even more encouraging for the future to see the growth in our leisure travel market," said TDTD Commissioner Susan Whitaker. "Tennessee's growth continues to illustrate the commitment and vision our travel industry has for making our state a must-see destination and unique travel experience."

Whitaker also noted an increase in the number of domestic visitors who were spending at least one night during a trip to Tennessee. In 2004, Tennessee's domestic overnight travel volume increased 4.6 percent from 26.1 million visitors in 2003 to 27.3 million visitors in 2004.

"This is an important market segment to watch because these are the visitors who spend the greatest amount of money while visiting," Whitaker said. "Unlike people who visit for day trips, these visitors spend additional money for lodging, meals, and attraction visits. It's exciting to see this kind of growth in a market segment that truly impacts our economy."

The Travel Industry Association of America (TIA) is a national, non-profit organization representing all components of the \$552 billion travel industry. TIA's mission is to represent the whole of the U.S. travel industry, promoting and facilitating increased travel to and within the United States.

Vacation Guide Inquiries On the Rise

Continued from page 1

The new marketing campaign and media buy for 2005-06 was announced during a 10-day tour of 11 cities across the state in late July and early August by Commissioner Susan Whitaker and her staff and again at the Governor's Conference on Tourism.

The branding campaign was launched April 2004 and test marketed in nine key markets - Atlanta, Little Rock, St. Louis, Birmingham, Greenville-Sparta-Asheville, Louisville, Lexington, Huntsville, and Cincinnati. The test initiative generated impressive results. The inquiries in the test markets doubled or increased by 2.5 after the television spots ran. In fact, inquiries from the Atlanta market tripled.

As part of the power launch the campaign was expanded to the state's 14 key driver markets. The new campaign also includes a number of other initiatives such as national cable television, an instate television campaign, and a wide-array of print co-op opportunities.

A detailed marketing campaign outline can be found online at www.tennessee.gov/tourdev under the Research & Reports section.

TNVACATION.COM RELAUNCHES WITH NEW LOOK AND FEATURES

In late July, the Department launched a new version of the state's consumer tourism site, www.TNvacation.com. The site has the same Web address, but a totally different look along with new features for the traveler and the Department's industry partners.

The dynamic and unique graphic design is based on the Department's marketing campaign, "Tennessee. The Stage Is Set for You!" The new site features a navigation that has been streamlined and strategically grouped according to an easy three-level scheme - interest, geography, and function. The main interest areas include Music & Arts, Sports & Recreation, History & Heritage, Nature & Outdoors, and Attractions.

A number of new highlights include e-Post Cards, seasonal information pages such as holiday events or fall foliage vacation ideas, maps/driving directions, detailed partner pages, and a Trip Builder, which are all functions developed to lengthen a user's time on the site. A new feature on the main page is a "Top Tenn Things to Do," which changes with each visit to the site and includes a shuffle feature that allows a visitor to repeatedly refresh the list with new things to do throughout the state.

Each attraction, destination, accommodation, etc., listed in the Department's Vacation Guide has a partner page on the new version of the Web site. The partner pages have a variety of new functions. The partner may:

- Update contact information.
- Update amenities, hours, payment types, admission information and dates closed.
- Change description text in main area.
- Set a Web site address (link opens in new window from the TNvacation.com site).
- Set a purchase Web site address. This is for partners who offer ticket sales or reservations online, giving a direct link for the user into the ecommerce/purchase part of a partner's Web site.
- Upload pictures. After two or more photos have been uploaded, a photo gallery is automatically created on the partner page for browsing.
- Create/upload coupons and deals. Partners can upload coupons or other deals to appear on the partner page for users to download.
- Create an event to appear on the event area of the site, as well as on the own partner page.
- Update driving directions.

For more information on the new version of TNvacation.com or how to update a partner page, contact Keith Britt at keith.britt@state.tn.us or 615-741-9010.



2005 Governor's Conference: "History in the Making"

Continued from page 1

"History in the Making" was the theme for the successful 2005 event. Attendees enjoyed great food and music at receptions at The Factory in Franklin on Wednesday night and at Carnton Plantation on Thursday night. Many attendees also enjoyed pre-conference visits to the wide array of historic attractions in Williamson County. In addition to acting as tourists in the host city of Franklin, the attendees took part in 10 educational seminars designed for all segments of the tourism industry.

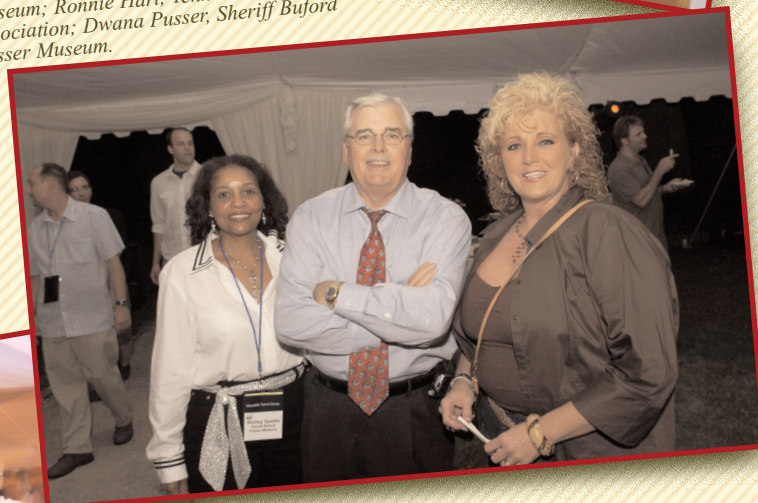
Governor Phil Bredesen delivered the Governor's Luncheon address, and was awarded the first Champion of Tourism Award by TTR. During the luncheon, David Perella was named as the newest member of TTR's Knights of the Roundtable for his extensive work and commitment to the Tennessee tourism industry. Perella is the Gatlinburg director of tourism. TTR outgoing chairman Claudia Moody also was honored for her two-year term as the organization's chairman.

The conference's keynote speaker was Roger Brooks, who kept the crowd focused on the future by discussing "The Top 10 Trends in Tourism." Brooks, recognized as one of the foremost branding, marketing and product development experts in the tourism industry, has worked with more than 250 communities in 37 states and is the co-author of the book, "The 25 Immutable Rules of Successful Tourism."



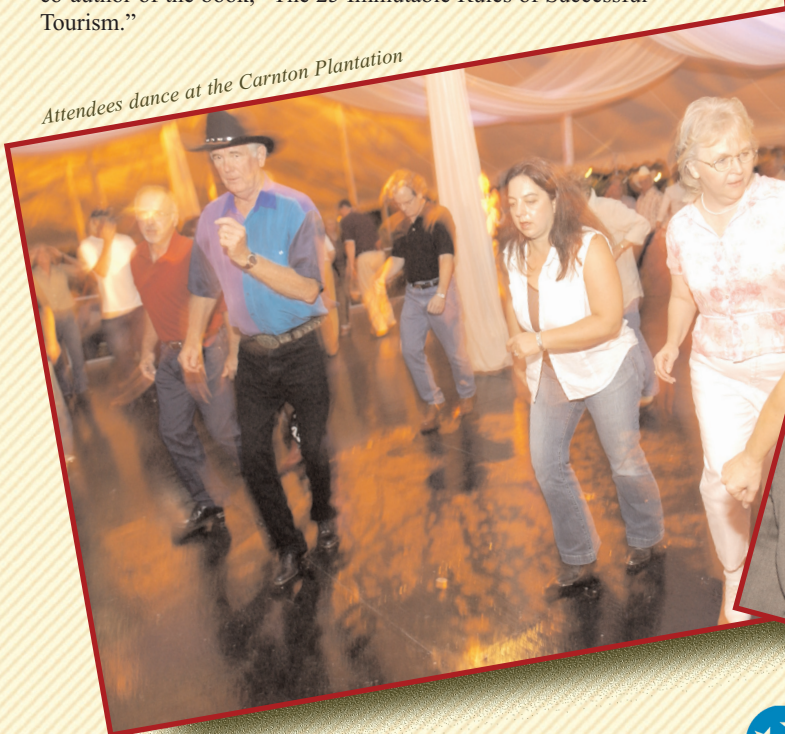
David Perella and Claudia Moody

Shirley Sparks, Sherriff Buford Pusser Museum; Ronnie Hart, Tennessee Restaurant Association; Dwana Pusser, Sheriff Buford Pusser Museum.



Joe Valentino, Oak Ridge Convention and Visitors Bureau; Dr. Steve Morse, University of Tennessee; Dr. Rachel Chen, University of Tennessee.

Attendees dance at the Carnton Plantation



TDTD Announces Tennessee's Top Attractions for 2004

From the thrill rides of Dollywood to the world-famous pandas of the Memphis Zoo, Tennessee's top 10 attractions drew more than 10.52 million visitors in 2004, according to a new report from the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development.

The state tourism department's new report outlines Tennessee's Top 50 Attractions in 2004 and includes only attractions that reported attendance to the state. The Top 50 report was compiled by the department's research division from visitation information provided by the individual attractions.

Dollywood remained atop the list with 2.4 million visitors reported in 2004, followed by Ripley's Aquarium of the Smokies (1.6 million), Bristol Motor Speedway (1.145 million), Ober Gatlinburg (865,623), Tennessee Aquarium (856,000), Golf & Games Family Park of Memphis (825,000), Memphis Zoo (810,291), Casey Jones Village of Jackson (770,000), Grand Ole Opry House & Opry Museum (662,495), and the Chattanooga Choo Choo (592,360).

"Tourism in Tennessee continued to be big business in 2004 with more than 43.64 million domestic visitors, an increase of some 890,000 over 2003 that moved our state from the 12th to the 11th most visited state by U.S. residents," said Susan Whitaker, commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development. "And, it is our wonderful array of attractions from all regions of our state that keep drawing millions of visitors from across the U.S. and abroad."

Whitaker said Tennessee's unique attractions have made the state an international tourist destination.

"One look at this Top 50, and it's easy to see why Tennessee's tourism industry continues to grow," Whitaker said. "Tennessee offers a visitor an enormous selection from theme parks, outdoor adventure, family entertainment and shopping experiences to museums, historic homes, Civil War sites and cultural heritage destinations."

2004 Top Attractions Report

Rank	Attraction	2004 Visitation
#1	Dollywood, <i>Pigeon Forge</i>	2,400,000
#2	Ripley's Aquarium of the Smokies, <i>Gatlinburg</i>	1,600,000
#3	Bristol Motor Speedway, <i>Bristol</i>	1,145,000
#4	Ober Gatlinburg, <i>Gatlinburg</i>	865,623
#5	Tennessee Aquarium, <i>Chattanooga</i>	856,000
#6	Golf & Games Family Park, <i>Memphis</i>	825,000
#7	Memphis Zoo, <i>Memphis</i>	810,291
#8	*Casey Jones Village, <i>Jackson</i>	770,000
#9	Grand Ole Opry House & Opry Museum, <i>Nashville</i>	662,495
#10	Chattanooga Choo Choo, <i>Chattanooga</i>	592,360
#11	Loretta Lynn's Ranch, <i>Hurricane Mills</i>	578,000
#12	Memphis Motorsports Park, <i>Memphis</i>	568,244
#13	Tennessee Aquarium IMAX 3D Theater, <i>Chattanooga</i>	506,000
#14	Nashville Zoo, <i>Nashville</i>	494,033
#15	Gatlinburg Sky Lift, <i>Gatlinburg</i>	487,454
#16	Memphis Pink Palace Museum, <i>Memphis</i>	444,354
#17	Lookout Mountain Incline Railway, <i>Chattanooga</i>	434,119
#18	Rock City Gardens, <i>Chattanooga</i>	405,246
#19	Knoxville Zoological Park, <i>Knoxville</i>	396,345
#20	Ruby Falls, <i>Chattanooga</i>	391,039
#21	Dolly's Splash Country, <i>Pigeon Forge</i>	325,000+
#22	Nashville Shores, <i>Nashville</i>	320,000
#23	TN River Fresh Water Pearl Farm, Tour, Museum & Mini Theater, <i>Camden</i>	318,950
#24	Frist Center for the Visual Arts, <i>Nashville</i>	306,561
#25	Lake Winnepesaukah, <i>Chattanooga</i>	300,000
#26	Louise Mandrell Theater, <i>Pigeon Forge</i>	290,001
#27	Country Music Hall of Fame, <i>Nashville</i>	288,061
#28	Adventure Science Center, <i>Nashville</i>	272,103
#29	Ryman Auditorium, <i>Nashville</i>	270,326
#30	General Jackson Showboat, <i>Nashville</i>	250,000
#31	Renaissance Center, <i>Dickson</i>	250,000
#32	Libertyland/Mid-South Fair, <i>Memphis</i>	246,044
#33	Creative Discovery Museum, <i>Chattanooga</i>	218,000
#34	*Jack Daniel Distillery, <i>Lynchburg</i>	200,000
#35	Nashville Motor Speedway, <i>Nashville</i>	200,000
#36	Cheekwood-Tennessee Botanical Gardens & Museum of Art, <i>Nashville</i>	190,000
#37	The Hermitage, <i>Nashville</i>	190,000
#38	Music City Motorplex, <i>Nashville</i>	190,000
#39	Memphis Botanic Gardens, <i>Memphis</i>	186,000
#40	Lost Sea, <i>Sweetwater</i>	180,000
#41	Cumberland County Playhouse, <i>Crossville</i>	175,143
#42	Mud Island River Park & Museum, <i>Memphis</i>	161,356
#43	National Civil Rights Museum, <i>Memphis</i>	160,000
#44	Bays Mountain Park & Planetarium, <i>Kingsport</i>	155,436
#45	Museum of Appalachia, <i>Norris</i>	150,000
#46	Belle Meade Plantation, <i>Nashville</i>	146,040
#47	Children's Museum of Memphis, <i>Memphis</i>	143,639
#48	West Tennessee Delta Heritage Center, <i>Brownsville</i>	143,110
#49	American Museum of Science and Energy, <i>Oak Ridge</i>	133,700
#50	The Parthenon, <i>Nashville</i>	132,035

*Free admission.

Source: Visitation information provided by individual attraction. Listing includes only those attractions that reported attendance.

Attractions eligible to be listed in Tennessee's Top Attractions List include:

Amusement/Theme Parks

Cultural/Historic Organizations including museums, heritage sites/attractions, historic homes, estates and plantations

Dining/Entertainment Attractions such as dinner theaters, live performing art venues and theme restaurants

Scenic/Natural Areas such as show caves and national, state or local parks

Scientific/Educational Institutions including discovery centers, libraries and science museums

Sightseeing Companies such as dinner cruises and helicopter or walking tour operations

Zoos/Aquariums and Wild Animal Parks



Tennessee's State Museum Hosts Six Centuries of European Masters

Rau Collection Exhibits through January 15, 2006

An art exhibition showcasing many of Europe's greatest artists is on display through January 15, 2006, at the Tennessee State Museum in Nashville.

The State Museum is the only museum in the Southeast and the last in the United States to present the exhibition of paintings from the renowned collection of Dr. Gustav Rau. Showcased are 95 rarely seen masterpieces by El Greco, Gainsborough, Cézanne, Pissarro, Monet, Renoir, Degas, Cassatt and many others. Half of the works on display are Old Master paintings from the 15th to the early 19th centuries, and the other half represents Impressionist, Post-Impressionist and early modern art from the mid-19th to mid-20th centuries.

"The Rau Collection is a virtual stroll through six centuries of art history," said Lois Riggins-Ezzell, executive director of the museum. "We are providing our region with a singular opportunity to experience magnificent work by some of the world's greatest artists."

Among the highlights of the exhibition are:

- Six paintings by Claude Monet, including *The Wooden Bridge*;
- Fra Angelico's *Saint Nicholas of Bari* and *Saint Michael*;
- Paul Cézanne's *The Sea at L'Estaque*;
- Auguste Renoir's *Woman with a Rose*;
- Canaletto's *Saint Mark's Square*; and,
- El Greco's *Saint Dominic in Prayer*.

The initial public exhibition of the collection, at the Musée de Luxembourg in Paris, drew a record attendance of 300,000 and was declared by the French media to be the best art exhibition of the year 2001.

For ticket information, call 1-800-882-4275 or visit www.theraucollection.com.

Six Centuries with the
European Masters
Collection
Rau!



TDTD TAKES PART IN TRAVEL SOUTH'S DISCOVER THE SOUTHERN WAY IN CANADA

During the last week of September, the TDTD joined 70 other tourism industry representatives from the 12 member states of Travel South for a week-long sales mission to Canada. The mission to the province of Ontario was to encourage Canadians to *Discover the Southern Way*.

The one-week event included training sessions and destination displays at the Canadian Automobile Association headquarters followed by a day when 12 teams of four traveled throughout the province to market the South to tour operators and wholesalers.

Lee Curtis, TDTD sales director, attended the sales mission and noted that on Sept. 29 more than 10,000 consumers attended the first "South on the Square Vacation Fair" consumer travel show in Toronto.

Curtis also said that Travel South USA has launched a new Web site, www.travelsouthusa.com, focused on the Canadian traveler.

Travel South USA is America's oldest and largest regional travel promotion organization. The non-profit includes Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia.

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Send your comments and suggestions to the editor, Keith Britt, at (615) 741-9010 or Keith.Britt@state.tn.us. We welcome your input as we work together to put the spotlight on Tennessee!

Visit TNvacation.com Today!

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Governor Signs Conservation Act (Chattanooga) Governor Phil Bredesen signed the Tennessee Heritage Conservation Trust Fund Act of 2005. State and local elected officials, along with representatives from environmental groups across the state, showed their support by attending the signing ceremony at Burgess Falls State Natural Area. The Heritage Conservation Trust Fund provides a mechanism for the state to work with other public and private partners for the preservation and protection of priority tracts across Tennessee. "It's personally important to me to preserve land for the future of our state and the people of Tennessee," said Governor Bredesen. "Once it's gone, we can never go back to the wild spaces that are so much a part of Tennessee's landscape. The Heritage Conservation Trust Fund allows us to leverage our resources by partnering with other public and private groups who are seeking to achieve the same goals." Governor Bredesen budgeted \$10 million for the Trust Fund this fiscal year, which was approved by the Tennessee General Assembly. The Act authorizes the Trust Fund to accept private donations and contributions and authorizes the Fund to establish a 501(c)(3) to assist in raising private donations for land conservation.

Official: Tourism will see rebound (Tennessean) Despite cancellations, gas prices, state getting more vacation inquiries. Tennessee's fall and winter tourism season will not be hurt by higher gasoline prices or fallout from Hurricane Katrina, state Department of Tourist Development Commissioner Susan Whitaker said. Whitaker said some of Tennessee's tourism-related businesses saw cancellations during Labor Day weekend and that there is no doubt the timing of recent events was difficult for the industry. Whitaker said, however, that Tennessee will see a rebound. She said the state is seeing a bump in inquiries from people who want information on tourist destinations. In August, the department had 41,954 inquiries, compared to 18,355 in August 2004 and 11,452 in August 2003, according to updated numbers released this month. Whitaker credits the increase to extra marketing efforts from a one-time \$4.5 million appropriation by the Tennessee General Assembly to launch a branding campaign featuring Tennessee entertainers Dolly Parton and Isaac Hayes. Tourism has an estimated \$10.8 billion economic impact on the state's economy and employs about 177,100 people, according to the state. The inquiries may translate to more tourism business later in the year.

State tax collections beat forecasts (Associated Press) State revenue collections for the month of August were almost \$738 million, beating forecasts by about \$3.3 million, the Tennessee Department of Revenue reported Friday. For the month, which is the first collection period for fiscal 2005-2006, the state's general fund overcollected by \$6.2 million, while four other funds undercollected \$2.9 million. Sales tax collections beat the estimate of \$531.2 million by \$1.4 million. Franchise and excise taxes collected \$700,000 more than the expected \$33 million. Gasoline and motor fuel tax revenue declined by 4.4%, bringing in \$4.2 million less than expected. Inheritance taxes were undercollected by \$3.3 million.

MIM cookoff Ranks 2nd among world festivals (Commercial Appeal) The Memphis in May World Championship Barbecue Cooking Contest, which drew more than 91,000 visitors to Tom Lee Park this year, lost by a nose to the Kentucky Derby Festival among the top celebrations in the world in 2005. The barbecue contest, a signature event of the Memphis in May International Festival, drew 252 teams from 38 states, England and Canada on its way to a silver "Grand Pinnacle" award from the International Festival & Events Association. The award placed the event ahead of Walt Disney World and other major U.S. and international attractions for 2005, a sort of Ms. Piggy trumps Mickey Mouse finish for the 29-year-old Memphis festival. MIM includes an actual Ms. Piggy contest as part of a raucous barbecue competition that has drawn "Today Show" crews, Martha Stewart and other major publicity to a city more often known for its rock and blues music heritage. In all, Memphis in May won 10 pinnacle awards, including a first place or gold award for best overall sponsorship by Cattlemen's Barbecue Sauce, a division of French's Foodservice. On its Web site, Cattlemen's offers free trips to Memphis in May for winners of Cattlemen's barbecue recipe contests. Memphis in May executive vice president Diane Hampton said the pinnacle awards and an additional volunteer-of-the-year award to Lisa Collins, chairman of the MIM Hospitality Committee, are the most prestigious in the festival and events industry. "They bring more TV coverage, and they bring more visitors who are festival goers," she said.

http://www.commercialappeal.com/mca/local_news/article/0,1426,MCA_437_4116461,00.html

Convention bureau unveils branding campaign to play up musical identity (Nashville Business Journal) [Nashville Convention & Visitors Bureau](#) has launched a Music City branding initiative to emphasize Nashville's wide-ranging musical genres and re-energize Nashville's reputation, through a myriad of partnerships with area businesses and the music industry. Butch Spyridon, Nashville CVB president, says the campaign isn't intended to ignore the city's country music heritage. Instead, it will highlight Nashville's other music genres, such as jazz, rock, bluegrass and classical. The initiative, funded as part of the CVB's \$4 million advertising budget, is an about-face from efforts by city leaders a few years ago to play down Nashville as Music City in order to attract more convention business. Those leaders now say what makes Nashville most attractive to tourists and visitors, as well as many residents and businesses, is its music. "Music is an integral part of Nashville's image, reputation and identity," says Spyridon. Included in Phase I of the Music City Brand initiative is a 16-page book to explain why Nashville is Music City and present the city's multi-faceted music heritage, along with a brand tool kit for businesses. The tool kit provides a road map for how companies can incorporate the Music City brand into their business. For example, [Coca-Cola](#), a strategic partner in the branding campaign, has put on its trucks: "Welcome to Music City. Singing Makes You Thirsty." Other strategic partners are Hartmann, Jack Daniel's, [Southwest Airlines](#), [Tractor Supply](#) and [XM Satellite Radio](#).
<http://nashville.bizjournals.com/nashville/stories/2005/09/19/daily18.html?t=printable>



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Peabody's cap gets a feather (Commercial Appeal) A national group has recognized what all of us already knew: The Peabody Memphis is a historic hotel. It was the ducks that got the downtown landmark a membership this year in the The National Trust for Historic Preservation's list of Historic Hotels of America. The Peabody opened in 1925. In the 1930s, general manager Frank Shutt returned from a hunting trip and placed his live duck decoys in the hotel's lobby fountain, trust officials pointed out. The prank was well-received and the tradition continues daily with live ducks. To see the other properties around the country who have received this honor, go to historichotels.org.
http://www.commercialappeal.com/mca/business/columnists/article/0,1426,MCA_441_4129580,00.html

Web site names Nashville among top 'cool cities' (Nashville Business Journal) Citing its strong job growth and vast music industry, Kiplinger.com has named Nashville one of its "Seven Cool Cities" for 2005. The personal finance Web site also named Athens, Ga.; Atlanta; Austin, Texas; Denver; Minneapolis and Raleigh, N.C. to its list. It said the seven cities are "exciting locations for young people where jobs are plentiful and rents are low enough to leave you a little extra cash in your pocket to enjoy the nightlife."
<http://nashville.bizjournals.com/nashville/stories/2005/09/12/daily14.html?t=printable>

Community Named Among '100 Best' For Young People (Greenville Sun) The Greenville-Greene County community has been designated by a national organization as among the nation's "100 Best Communities For Young People." The recognition was given to this community by America's Promise, a not-for-profit organization founded by retired Gen. Colin Powell to promote the well-being of American youth. The mission of the organization, officials say, is to ensure that every child receive "Five Promises" essential to lifelong success: caring adults who are actively involved in their lives; safe places in which to learn and grow; a healthy start toward adulthood; an effective education that builds marketable skills; and opportunities to help others. The Greenville-Greene County community's recognition was awarded based upon local resources available to children and youth that were reported in a lengthy application. The application for the award was completed by a 16-member committee of local volunteers, facilitated by the Volunteer Center of Greenville-Greene County.

Moon Pie fest among state's "must-see" experiences (Shelbyville Times Gazette) Gov. Phil Bredesen has asked his department commissioners to name 20 things people need to do in Tennessee before they die, and typical tourist attractions don't count. Those other things include attending the RC Cola and Moon Pie Festival in Bell Buckle, according to Dianne Murray, a volunteer with Tennessee's Backroads Heritage who attended the governor's tourism conference. "Every Tennessee community has something special to offer and it's our job to get the word out," Bredesen told his audience of tourist industry professionals, including Wolfgang Streitborger, the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development representative in Germany. "There is a community out there for the Tennessee Walking Horse," Streitborger said in an interview with the Times-Gazette. Quoting German public radio, he said there are some 20,000 Tennessee Walking Horses in Germany, and noted the currency exchange rate is favorable for Germans to visit America. In fact, a German tour group is being organized to stay at Falcon Manor just south of McMinnville soon, according to proprietors George and Charlien McGlothlin. The bed and breakfast inn, housed in a late-1890s brick mansion, hosts theatrical presentations for visitors. "We're part of Tennessee's Backroads Heritage and they market the whole area," Charlien McGlothlin said of the group that promotes Bedford, Coffee and other area counties' tourist attractions. <http://www.t-g.com/story/1119472.html>

City awaits TDOT news (Mountain Press) The City of Sevierville could be getting some welcome news on its long-running greenway project. A deputy commissioner from the state Department of Transportation is expected to make what officials called an important announcement from the Burchfield Grove Memorial Arboretum. Officials would not confirm the reason for the event, but Deputy Commissioner Paul Degges will be speaking in about the same area where Gov. Phil Bredesen stood in August 2004 to announce the state was giving the city a \$198,000 enhancement grant to help fund the greenway program. The next phase of the greenway program will cost about \$831,600. In October, the city applied for a similar grant to pay for 80 percent that cost. The city would pay the remaining \$166,320. The city hopes to use the money to extend the existing greenway from where it ends south of Highway 35 to the area where the city plans to build an events center. A 12-foot bridge would cross the Pigeon River, and plans call for lighting along the trail as well. The plans also call for expanded parking at the arboretum, with spaces for up to 30 cars.

TVA donates land to Clinton for recreation (Knoxville News Sentinel) A key hurdle in Clinton's plan to create a new recreational complex next to Clinch River has been cleared, Mayor Winfred "Wimp" Shoopman said. TVA has agreed to transfer 17 acres of Carden Farm Industrial Park property to the city for recreational purposes at no charge, he said. The decision by TVA's board of directors came after three years of discussion and a \$55,000 city-funded study to determine the archeological significance of the land. "We knew it was sensitive and we couldn't build an industry there," Shoopman said. But last year's special study determined that the land, which twice over the centuries was used as an Indian village, wasn't so archeologically significant that it required special preservation. That finding cleared the way for TVA to act on the city's request that the land-use designation be changed from industrial to recreational.



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Youth Travel group brings convention to Memphis (Memphis Business Journal) The Student Youth Travel Association held its 9th annual conference in Memphis. Over 750 delegates will be converging on the Cook Convention Center, the site where travel organizers and will be able to meet and plan trips for youth groups. Representatives from across the U.S., Canada and Europe were in attendance. The economic impact of the conference is estimated at \$562,526, according to the Memphis Convention and Visitor's Bureau. Youth travel represents between 20-25% of the \$2.2 billion dollars generated by the travel industry every year. Michael Palmer, director of the SYTA, says the group chose Memphis for this year's conference as a result of the Memphis CVB's aggressive pursuit.

<http://memphis.bizjournals.com/memphis/stories/2005/09/12/daily37.html>

Memphis Recording Academy to honor Timberlake, Brewer (Memphis Business Journal) The [Memphis Chapter of The Recording Academy](#) is honoring four homegrown artists and one local radio station for their contribution to the creative community. The academy has named screenwriter and director Craig Brewer, multi-platinum artist Justin Timberlake, and legendary producing and songwriting team Isaac Hayes and David Porter as recipients of the Memphis Chapter's The Recording Academy Honors 2005. Also being honored this year is WDIA, the first African-American programmed radio outlet. This is the first year of the event. The awards will highlight those who the academy feel embody excellence, integrity and who have made significant contributions to the creative community.

<http://memphis.bizjournals.com/memphis/stories/2005/09/26/daily20.html?t=printable>

Hotel sector seeing Katrina boost (Nashville Business Journal) In the days since Hurricane Katrina brought devastation to Gulf Coast cities, Middle Tennessee has been among the states receiving those areas' displaced residents: providing them shelter, material goods and - when possible - comfort. Now, Middle Tennessee's hospitality sector is seeing some benefit, too. Area hotels are starting to book some of the smaller business meetings that were to be held this fall at Gulf Coast and New Orleans hotels. However, a lack of large local spaces means big convention business from those areas - New Orleans has canceled its conventions until at least Dec. 1 - likely will not make its way here. Butch Spyridon, president of the [Nashville Convention & Visitors Bureau](#), says several groups were very interested in coming to Nashville, but the area's large facilities are booked for October and November. "Business is starting to open up further out," says Spyridon.

<http://nashville.bizjournals.com/nashville/stories/2005/09/19/story5.html?t=printable>

Tourism is new focus of Robertson (Tennessean) You've heard of boom towns? Robertson County, due north of Nashville, is a boom county in Middle Tennessee. While Springfield is the county seat and the city that Robertson County is most closely identified with, the county also includes all or part of Adams (home of the legendary haunted cave of the Bell Witch), Coopertown, Cedar Hill, Cross Plains, Orlinda, Ridgetop, Millersville, White House and Greenbrier. "We're trying to develop our tourism market," said J. Mark Lowe, executive director of the Springfield-Robertson County Chamber of Commerce, "which is something we really haven't focused on much in the past. To do this, we've started the Robertson County Tourism Coalition, which will focus on promoting what we have to offer visitors from outside the county." Lowe said that Robertson County has a lot to offer people looking for a different destination for a good day trip, as well as a new home base. "We have great shopping, historic homes, tobacco farms and Civil War sites that will attract folks." Springfield has been known for the charm of its downtown area.

<http://tennessean.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?Date=20050923&Category=FYI&ArtNo=509230331&SectionCat=&Template=printart>

SEC Spells Money (Commercial Appeal) Liberty Bowl officials announced that beginning next year, they'll select a team from the Southeastern Conference to face a Conference USA opponent. That's great news, considering that most of the SEC schools are located within reasonable driving distances from Memphis. Although bowl attendance can vary due to a number of factors, having an SEC team involved is generally better than not having one. Skeptical? The bowl has topped the 60,000 mark for attendance twice in its history. SEC teams played in each of those games. As Kevin Kane, president of the Memphis Convention and Visitors Bureau, said: "Memphis is SEC country." Whether you follow football or not, the bowl's new conference affiliation should translate into a big score for the local economy.

http://www.commercialappeal.com/mca/todays_editorial/article/0,1426,MCA_537_4114084,00.html

Satellite branch from Cleveland could open off Beale by next spring (Commercial Appeal) A museum that eluded Memphis nearly 20 years ago will open a satellite just off Beale Street. The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum in Cleveland will soon have a branch in the Gibson Guitar Showcase facility. Nashid Madyun left his post as director of the Stax Museum of American Soul Music Friday to take the satellite's helm. Details about plans for the Rock Hall branch and a timetable for its opening were sketchy. Madyun, along with Rock Hall officials, referred questions about the satellite to Nashville-based Gibson Guitar Corp. However, a recent story in the Cleveland Plain Dealer newspaper reported that Terry Stewart, president of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum, said the Memphis satellite could open next spring. It is one of two "on tour" satellites under development.

http://www.commercialappeal.com/mca/local_news/article/0,1426,MCA_437_4088013,00.html



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New releases, book celebrate B.B. King's 80th birthday (Nashville City Paper) Riley B. (B.B.) King has reached a level of recognition and fame that surpasses all his contemporaries, although King constantly discounts the notion he's more influential than his idols Aaron "T-Bone" Walker, Lonnie Johnson and Django Reinhardt. He's not only the most honored and revered blues artist of all time, but a musical icon and institution. A 1987 Lifetime Grammy Achievement Award, Kennedy Center and Presidential Medal of the Arts winner, and a 2004 recipient of Sweden's prestigious Polar Music Prize, King celebrated his 80th birthday Sept. 16 and performed at his Nashville club. A trio of new projects also has been released in honor of that event. *B.B. King & Friends—80* (Geffen/Universal) matches him with several contemporary admirers and/or longtime friends, while *Original Greatest Hits* (Virgin) compiles the formative material that established King's playing and singing reputation on such labels as Bullet, RPM, Kent and Crown during the '40s, '50s and early '60s. The final item is a striking new book *Treasures* (Bullfinch) by King and famed writer, manager, promoter and photographer Dick Waterman. It blends visually spectacular photos from King's personal collection with other mementos and recollections from King and many musicians, writers and music community figures that revere him. The type of session that usually draws the ire of purists, *80* contains familiar names. Besides the incredible photos, *Treasures* serves as a marvelous guide into King's fantastic life. These releases are glorious additions to one of American music's greatest legacies.

http://66.45.13.138/index.cfm?section=12&screen=news&news_id=44801

Plans unveiled: Birthplace of Country Music Cultural Center, Bristol (Times-News) The story of country music will flow through the building like notes on a page - and tourism dollars will flow into the region to the tune of an estimated \$43.2 million economic impact over a five-year period. Those outlooks highlighted the public unveiling of a conceptual plan for the new Birthplace of Country Music Cultural Heritage Center in downtown Bristol. The center is a project of the Birthplace of Country Music Alliance, and BCMA officials said it could open in downtown Bristol by late 2007 or 2008 - depending on funding and other considerations. The center, which would allow BCMA's museum to relocate from its present location in rented space in the Bristol Mall, carries a total estimated cost of \$9.5 million, BCMA officials said. That figure includes \$1.46 million for design work, \$4.1 million for construction, and \$3.94 million for exhibits. In September 2004, the Birthplace of Country Music Alliance announced that local businessman Steve Johnson donated a 24,000-square-foot historic structure at 520 Cumberland St. in downtown Bristol for use as a new facility.

Film committee debates state incentives (Nashville Business Journal) Recommendations from Tennessee's Film Production Advisory Committee may result in more jobs in the Nashville area and across Tennessee. The committee held its second public meeting at the Belcourt Theatre to hear comments on a law signed by Gov. Phil Bredesen this year. The law created the committee and future incentives for visual content production in the state, including film, television, cell-phone downloads, computers and commercials. In addition, incentives may attract more video gaming companies to the state and increase soundtrack production work. The committee, appointed by Bredesen, is measuring the economic impact of visual content on the state and looking at incentives already in existence here and in other states. The group's findings, recommendations and proposed legislative changes will be presented to the governor and Legislature by Feb. 1.

Recognizing TDEC for raising ecological awareness (Oak Ridger) Sandra K. Goss, executive director of Tennessee Citizens for Wilderness Planning, said the luncheon was meant to thank the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation and its employees for its efforts to raise ecological awareness and conserve land for the future. Two and a half years ago, 14 state parks were closed. "The parks were in disarray," said Jim Fyke, commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Transportation. Today, each of the state's 54 parks is fully operational, Fyke said. "The change in direction and morale within the department has been unbelievable," he said. Because of the dedication and experience of its employees, the TDEC parks and recreation division is "in the Final Four" of a contest to determine the top state parks system in the nation. "If we win that, it's an unbelievable accomplishment for the staff of state parks," he said. Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation is in the running for the 2005 National Gold Medal Awards for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management.

A Commoner's Rowdy Ride to the White House (New York Times) A BIOGRAPHER of Benjamin Franklin and Theodore Roosevelt, H. W. Brands has shifted his lens westward to tell the life of Andrew Jackson. His subject is well chosen - a president generally ranked as significant yet one whose story is not widely known. A generation younger than the signers of the Declaration of Independence, Jackson showed gallantry as a scout during the Revolution but had little else in common with the founding fathers. He had no money, no background, no family. Unlike Adams, he was not intellectual, and unlike Jefferson, he was seemingly not introspective. He wrote no memoirs, and while not unlettered, he broke the string of chief executives who were philosophical heirs to the Enlightenment. Reading the great writers seems to have occupied less of his time than fighting duels. And unlike his archrival, John Quincy Adams, whose father was a president, Jackson's father, an Irish immigrant, died before his birth. By the age of 14, the future president had also lost his mother and both his brothers, and witnessed the burning of his home by British troops. With the memory of his mother his "only capital," he headed west from South Carolina to the Tennessee territory and made his name as an Indian fighter and self-styled conquistador against various European powers that would continue, even decades after Yorktown, to treat the interior of North America like a colonial chess board. As a general, he invaded Spanish Florida; as president, he emboldened Texans to rebel against Mexico. His most glorious moment occurred at the end of the War of 1812, when he saved New Orleans - a prize sought for the very waters that have recently wreaked its destruction - from the British.



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Bridge draws to a close (Chattanooga Times-Free Press) The landmark Chief John Ross Bridge over the Tennessee River at Market Street will close to all traffic and will start on a \$13 million restoration, according to state officials. "Although this will be an inconvenience, the city of Chattanooga will have a totally refurbished bridge that will be a great source of pride," said Bob Brown, regional director for the Tennessee Department of Transportation. Officials postponed restoration of the historic, 88-year-old drawbridge until the 21st Century Waterfront Plan "was substantially complete," according to Ian Engstrom, an engineer with Parsons Transportation Group. "We thought we'd be working on it in 2001," Mr. Engstrom said. The bridge is near the site a Civil War-era structure that washed away in 1867 and augmented the Walnut Street Bridge, built in 1891, to open development of North Chattanooga, according to newspaper accounts from the period. City Traffic Engineer John Van Winkle said about 21,000 vehicles crossed the Market Street Bridge daily in 2004. During the two-year bridge closing, the Olgiate Bridge should absorb most of those vehicles, he said. The bridge is expected to reopen in September 2007, officials said. (SUBSCRIPTION)

<http://class.timesfreepress.com/ShowStoryTemplate.asp?Path=ChatTFPress/2005/09/17&ID=Ar00100&Section=Front%20Page>

GAC plans relocation to Music City (Nashville City Paper) The Great American Country (GAC) network is moving its corporate offices to Nashville from Denver, making Music City home to two major country music TV networks including CMT. Details about the move – which also includes studios and post-production facilities – will be disclosed today at a news conference to be attended by Gov. Phil Bredesen and Mayor Bill Purcell, among others. The relocation was not unexpected, as GAC has had a small production staff in Nashville for years now, and the network has been broadcasting the Grand Ole Opry since October 2004. Nearly a year ago, GAC was acquired by Scripps Networks of Knoxville, which also runs the Shop At Home network in Nashville. David Bennett, executive director of the Tennessee Film, Entertainment and Music Commission, praised GAC's decision to expand its Nashville presence. "It will create a significant uptick in production here in Nashville for many reasons, not the least of which is that we have another good viable venue for country music videos," he said. "When you couple that with the production they're going to be generating, it's really great."

Farmers seek alternative products to make a profit (Chattanooga Times-Free Press) As farmers face development pressures and rising costs, state officials are encouraging them to consider agricultural alternatives from corn mazes to baking. Tennessee Agriculture Commissioner Ken Givens said he sees great hope in niche markets, where farmers grow crops that can be sold for specialty uses. He said value-added projects, such as taking strawberries and converting some of them into jams and jellies, also can be valuable. They take a raw product off the farm and add value to it and put it in a can," he said. Joe Gaines, the Tennessee Department of Agriculture's assistant commissioner for market development, said state workers partner with farmers and small agricultural businesses to help establish and promote agribusiness such as corn mazes, pumpkin patches or bakery operations. Mark Burnett became a general partner in Wooden's Apple House in 1996, and today three families work together in the Bledsoe County pie shop and bakery operation. By expanding from just an orchard, Mr. Burnett said they have been able to expand their customer base. "Some people come out just for the apples, and some people come for the bakery and the apples," he said. (SUBSCRIPTION)

The house that got neighbors all shook up (Associated Press) There are no jungle rooms at 1034 Audubon Drive, no gold records and no pink Cadillacs. But this modest ranch-style house in the Audubon Park subdivision of southeast Memphis shares a history with Graceland, the famous white-columned mansion more than 10 miles away. The house Elvis Presley purchased at age 21, a home that his fame quickly outgrew, has been nominated to the National Register of Historic Places. The State Review Board approved the nomination and now it moves on for approval at the national level. Judith Johnson, an architecture historian in Memphis, helped the private owners put the house up for nomination. No stranger to Elvis history, Johnson was involved in protecting from demolition a Memphis public housing unit, Lauderdale Courts, where Elvis spent his teenage years. Now she's hoping to put another Elvis homestead on the map. Purchased with his first royalty checks from RCA Studio on March 8, 1956, Elvis, his parents and grandmother lived in the four-bedroom house for only a year. One month after moving in, his single "Heartbreak Hotel" hit No. 1 on the Billboard charts, ultimately ending any privacy he had in the neighborhood.

SSHBEA shows have positive impact (Times Gazette) The economic benefit for Bedford County from three annual Spotted Saddle Horse Breeders' and Exhibitors' Association shows is greater than \$7 million, according to calculations reported by The Celebration's CEO to the group's chairman. "This economic impact is based on a nationally recognized formula that both the American Horse Council and the American Horse Shows Association use for computing the economic impact for an equine event in a community," reported Ron Thomas, chief executive officer of The Celebration. Travis Kelley, SSHBEA president, explains that the spotted horse and the walking horse have the same gait. "The difference is ours have spots." He predicts 3,000 people and 900 horses are coming to Shelbyville for the eight-day event at Calsonic Arena. Thomas reported the "most impressive" economic impact of more than \$7 million to Celebration Board Chairman John T. Bobo following a close examination of a report prepared for The Celebration by Murfreesboro-based Sport Insight Group which polled people with tickets to the Tennessee Walking Horse National Celebration. Shelbyville's 17,500 population practically doubles during the National Celebration which, according to Sport Insight, was found to have a \$38 million economic impact on the local economy.



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Movie stays true to legend of Bell Witch (Times Free Press) If you can't keep a good witch down, what kind of chance do you have at stopping a bad one? In the case of Tennessee's storied Bell Witch, the witch wasn't a witch at all, but a ghost or spirit. The world premiere at Ryman Auditorium of "Bell Witch: The Movie" makes this the second of three films about the Adams haunt to be released in a 12-month period. "The Hollywood pitch would be 'Little House on the Prairie meets Poltergeist.' It's neither a slasher nor a bodycount film. We kept it real family-friendly. We just tell the story of the Bell Witch and keep it as true to the legend as possible," says Shane Marr, the film's co-writer, producer and director, an eighth-generation native of Gatlinburg who bases his Big River Pictures company in Sevierville. Actor J.D. Hart, who has lived in Nashville since 1985, had heard the tales of the Bell Witch but never took them seriously, that is until he got the role of John Bell, the victim of the spirit that began haunting the Bell family in 1817.

From bottom feeders to Beavers - Buffalo River overflowing with wildlife (Jackson Sun) Having canoed 98 miles of the Buffalo River in Middle Tennessee, state naturalist Mack Pritchard of Nashville says a paddler is sure to find respite there from the noise of everyday life. "It's wonderful to be out on a river and be away from the sound of diesel trucks. You feel like you're in the Garden of Eden again," Pritchard said. "Maybe you'll splash by a cow, maybe children swimming. You pass by little camps, you see folks fishing - there's nothing more wonderful than floating a scenic river and seeing wildlife in a natural condition," he said. With 18 places to put in and take out throughout four counties, the Buffalo is a 110-mile undammed tributary of the Duck River. Take the stretches of this Class I-II river near an area in Flatwoods called Slink Shoal. "Slink Shoal, you've got the wonderful tributaries coming through there. It's a spring-fed stream," Pritchard said, adding his travels have put him in contact with many residents over the years. "I would stop along in there and talk with the locals, swap a can of Prince Albert tobacco for a couple of arrowheads ..." While Pritchard's easy conversation would make friends anywhere, it's clear what he's really interested in is the habitat. Having lived on the Cumberland River for years, Pritchard leaves out food for animals that come around frequently.

State to buy rest of Flat Rock natural area (Associated Press) Tennessee will purchase the remaining tracts of the Flat Rock Cedar Glades and Barrens to bring the entire natural area under state control. Tennessee received a \$552,000 federal Endangered Species Act grant that will allow state officials to purchase 208 acres from the Nature Conservancy to add to 638 acres already under state control. The Nature Conservancy is an international nonprofit organization that works to preserve natural areas and resources, often by purchasing lands or providing funding for conservation. The Nature Conservancy has agreed to sell the property for a little more than half of its actual value, estimated around \$1 million. The purchase will move forward after proper state approval, which could take about two months, said Reggie Reeves, director of the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation's Division of Natural Heritage. The Flat Rock natural area, located about 8 miles east of Murfreesboro, includes several endangered plants like the rare Pyne's Ground Plum and leafy prairie clover. The area boasts a variety of forest types, oak barrens, open grassland barrens and cedar glades, according to TDEC.

3 grants boost road, tourism projects (Chattanooga Times-Free Press) Three communities in Southeast Tennessee have received grants for local improvements from the Department of Transportation. Etowah in McMinn County, Copperhill in Polk County and Meigs County won grants for streets and visitor enhancement, according to a news release from the Department of Transportation. Etowah was the biggest winner, with \$436,568 awarded for new sidewalks and lighting downtown. Meigs County will get \$277,778 to help with construction of the Cherokee Removal Memorial Visitor Center. Copperhill was given \$8,800 for downtown sidewalks. Etowah Chamber of Commerce Director Durrant Tullock said the money will be used to improve the appearance of the downtown strip along U.S. Highway 411 from Fifth Street to 10th Street. "We will get input from businesses on the type of sidewalk they want," Mr. Tullock said. Plans call for antique-type lighting fixtures along the 5,800-foot route, as well as plantings and streetscape. Etowah City Manager John Solsbee said construction will be coordinated around the city's 100-year anniversary next year.

(SUBSCRIPTION

<http://class.timesfreepress.com/ShowStoryTemplate.asp?Path=ChatTFPress/2005/10/04&ID=Ar00805&Section=Metro/Region>

Steel brings passion for park to new job (Monroe County Advocate) Fort Loudoun State Historic Area recently hired a new park ranger. While Shay Steel is new to the position, she is not new to the park. Steel replaced park ranger Jim Brannon, who transferred to Cumberland Trail State Park earlier this summer. Steel made the move to Vonore from Montgomery Bell State Park. Before she worked there, she worked at Fort Loudoun for two summers. "I just enjoyed it so much and I just sort of developed a passion for the park and this period of history. I just love this park," she said. Steel's first day back on the job she loves was Sept. 16. She hopes to educate visitors more about the roles women played, both at the park and during its period in time, and about archaeology. The fort was in use in the mid-18th century. The archaeological site was buried under 17 feet of dirt when the Tennessee Valley Authority dammed the Little Tennessee River. Fort visitors now see a reconstruction located on top of the original fort. The park's friends group, The Fort Loudoun Association, is currently raising money to finish rebuilding everything that would have been in the original fort. Steel said she looks forward to the rebuilding.



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Civic Arts Center (Blount Today) Supporters of a partnership that combines Maryville College, public and private funding to build a \$50 million civic arts center at the college say the facility is needed and would be a cultural asset that would stir the imagination and benefit Blount County's economy. Naysayers admit the importance a civic arts center, but say they are weary of funding such projects with tax dollars, holding that building and maintaining schools and roads should take priority above "luxury" expenditures like museums or arts centers. Planners recently presented updated information on the proposed center to leaders in Alcoa, Maryville and Blount County. A vote of government support for Phase III, the building of the facility, could come in November. The need for an arts center for Maryville College is apparent to all involved. The question for most is one of scope. The proposed plan takes the center beyond what would be sufficient for the college to the next level, a \$50 million facility that would open a new venue for the county as well as enhance what the college can afford on its on.

New I-81 Signs Now Inform Motorists Of Davy Crockett Birthplace State Park (Sun)

What does it take to get two state legislators, a county mayor, a county commissioner, a tourism director, the head of a volunteer organization and a state park manager to gather on the shoulder of a busy interstate highway? The answer on Monday, at least as far as Greene County is concerned, was new roadside signs. The gathering was for a photograph to commemorate the installation of two huge signs along Interstate 81 near Exit 23 in western Greene County that direct motorists to leave Interstate 81 there if they wish to visit Davy Crockett Birthplace State Park in Limestone. Present along the shoulder of the northbound lanes of Interstate 81 near Exit 23 were: state Rep. David Hawk, R-5th of Greeneville; state Rep. Eddie Yokley, D-11th, of Greene County; Greene County Mayor Roger Jones; County Commissioner Kevin Morrison; Tammy Kinser, the Greene County Partnership's tourism director; Mark Halback, the manager of Davy Crockett Birthplace State Park; and Sandra Metcalf, the president of a volunteer organization called Pioneer Friends of Davy Crockett Birthplace State Park. The park is located some 25 miles from Exit 23, but the western Greene County exit offers the most direct route (along U.S. Highway 11-E) to the park that encompasses the birthplace of Davy Crockett, the famous 19th century frontiersman, congressman and Alamo hero, local officials said.

<http://www.greene.xtn.net/index.php?template=news.view.subscriber&table=news&newsid=125065>

Trail touted for economic impact (Herald-Citizen)

PUTNAM COUNTY — As a Rails with Trails program in Putnam County nears final approval, public officials are optimistic about the economic impact the project will hold, even beyond a projected tourism boost. "Certainly, this will be a regional attraction to bring people here," said Chamber of Commerce President and CEO George Halford. But he said that's just the beginning of what could be a broad effect on Putnam County's business world. "There is a lot of economic impact outside of tourism," he said. "This is essentially an 18-mile vertical park for our citizens. This becomes a greenway, and developers in Murfreesboro are actually building subdivisions that connect with a trail there." Halford said the project has an immense yet unmeasured potential. "We're certainly excited about the possibilities," he said. Cookeville Mayor Charles Womack said the driving force behind the project is the rail aspect — a rebuilt railroad stretch that will allow transportation of sand from a mine near Crawford's Branch.

http://www.herald-citizen.com/NF/omf.wnm/herald/news_story.html?rkey=0037310+cr=gdh

Dancing draws crowd at annual powwow (Tennessean)

The 24th Annual Fall Festival and Pow Wow kicked off yesterday to the rhythm of drums and a whirl of colorful feathers. Booths displayed crafts from dozens of tribes. The smell of Indian fry bread wafted through the air. But most people focused their attention on the center ring where a dancer was guiding several children through a traditional tribal dance. "I want to get out there myself," said Sonya Shelton, 31, of Antioch. The three-day celebration at Long Hunter State Park, off Hobson Pike near Percy Priest Lake, is the largest and oldest powwow in the state, said Native American Indian Association Executive Director Ray Emanuel.

<http://www.tennessean.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?Date=20051015&Category=NEWS01&ArtNo=510150350&SectionCat=&Template=printart>

State inventories species in parks (Nashville City Paper)

Tennessee is the first state in the nation creating an inventory of species in all its parks. Organizations interested in participating in the ATBI project can call the state at 532-5249 or e-mail tnstateparks.volunteer@state.tn.us. The process is called All Taxa Biodiversity Inventory (ATBI). "There are some individual — usually city parks that are doing ATBI, usually in other states, but not a whole statewide effort other than Tennessee at this point," State Parks Biologist LinnAnn Welch said. "There is interest from other states to do it." Welch said the ATBI project, which started last summer, is modeled after the inventory the Great Smokey Mountains National Park has been doing for more than 10 years. This inventory lists anything from soil organisms, bacteria to large animals and plants. "With our new administration in place and our governor being very environmentally minded, they've been supporting us and helping State Parks get its own inventory process going on because in a lot of cases a lot of state parks don't have a good inventory of the plants and animals there," Welch said. "We're anticipating to have many species of plants or animals in the parks that we might even know existed or didn't know were in this state."

http://www.nashvillecitypaper.com/index.cfm?section_id=9&screen=news&news_id=45188

